

News Clippings

February 9, 2009

Emergency Response

Indianapolis

Indiana Deploys Resources to Aid Kentucky

[Read the Article](#)

Fire

Camden

Cause of garage fire unknown

[Read the Article](#)

Washington, D.C.

Indiana Fire Departments Receiving Homeland Security Grants

[Read the Article](#)

Flooding

Gary

Melting snow puts Kankakee River on flood alert

[Read the Article](#)

Morgan County

Southern Indiana braces for potential flooding

[Read the Article](#)

Severe Weather

Muncie

Last week's snow cost county \$60,000

[Read the Article](#)



Indiana Deploys Resources to Aid Kentucky

Friday, February 06, 2009 6:53 PM

Feb. 6--INDIANAPOLIS -- -- In the late summer of 2008, Hurricane Ike took a small toll in Kentucky. Since then, the state has been picking up the pieces of the landscape and rubbish that was left behind. Last week a devastating ice storm hit Kentucky, creating about 600,000 power outages and other disasters across the state.

"When the storm came, it took a toll on power lines and trees," said Lt. Col. Kirk Hilbrecht, a National Guard public affairs officer. "Kentucky received a half inch to an inch of ice, which is equivalent to six times the normal weight on a tree branch. Trees fell onto roads, power lines, houses, cars, and people."

Hilbrecht said Kentucky officials turned to surrounding states for assistance. Along with Ohio, Florida, and West Virginia, the State of Indiana was more than willing to help. Indiana deployed 100 humvees, a five-person team, and more than 1,000 Duke Energy contractors this week in response.

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) coordinated with the Indiana National Guard to deliver the humvees to New Albany, Evansville, and Camp Atterbury, where they were picked up by Kentucky National Guard troops in order to make home checks for people without power and assist county emergency management agencies for other missions to determine needs that would require support beyond the county level, said Deedra Thombleson, a spokesperson for the Indiana National Guard.

Thombleson said the five-person Hoosier team reported to the Kentucky Emergency Operations Center in Frankfort. The team consists of three IDHS representatives, one guardsman, and one Indiana Task Force One member.

"They are working around the clock," she said.

Lew Middleton, communications manager for Duke Energy in Plainfield, said the company released 625 contractors early Monday that normally work with Duke Energy in the Midwest. The company also released 554 additional contractors obtained through mutual assistance that normally work hand in hand with other utilities.

"Some of them are line workers, tree trimmers, and supervisors," he said. "This is something we would normally do in case of disaster. They will be there until the work is done. If we need help, we can get it from them, and if they need help, they know they can call us."

More than 4,000 Kentucky National Guard troops remain on duty, with nearly 3,700 Army Guard Soldiers and 320 Air Guard members working side-by-side delivering generators, food, and water.

"This is a huge team effort on the part of everyone involved," Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general for Kentucky, said in a press release. "In many cases, our own troops have been hit hard by this disaster, but that hasn't slowed us down. We have everyone on board -- from aviators, military police, special forces, infantry, logistics, and dozens of other military professions -- hard at work to bring Kentucky out of the darkness."

There is a continued priority on assisting in the restoration of electric power to water plants, communications facilities, shelters, and homes. Troops are currently clearing routes for emergency response vehicles as well as helping utility crews gain access to damaged power transmission lines. Wellness checks also remain a top priority for Kentucky Guard troops. Guard members have on numerous occasions found residents in dire circumstances and have rendered aid -- to include providing food and water, and in many cases evacuation to shelters -- as appropriate.

Lack of fuel and blocked roads, along with boiled water alerts, have put a strain on households. Kentucky National Guard has responded by delivering 320,000 meals to points of distribution and another 210,000 meals in the pipeline. Guard members have also delivered 650,000 bottles of water so far, with an additional 300,000 now on the way to distribution points.

"During checks, volunteers have rescued several people that have carbon monoxide poisoning or internal heating problems, and even an elderly diabetic woman who ran out of her medicine," Hilbrecht said. "We have been going door to door. It has been very important. We have cleared 75 percent of the homes (as of Wednesday) and anticipate on being 100 percent complete with home checks within the week."

As of Wednesday, more than a week after the ice storm, there were still 219,000 people without power, he said.

"We are still fighting and fighting strong," Hilbrecht said. "(State officials) are pleased and proud at what the men and women in the National Guard having been doing."

andrea.hirsch@flyergroup.com

[Back to Top](#)



February 6, 2009

Cause of garage fire unknown

By *CURT SLYDER*
cslyder@jconline.com

CAMDEN -- Investigators were still searching for the cause on Thursday of a Wednesday night fire that destroyed a business building south of Camden.

About 70 firefighters from seven departments could not save an 80-by-60-foot steel garage at Hog Slat Inc., 200 N. Meridian Road, in Carroll County.

"The call came in at about 9:42 p.m. (Wednesday)," said Chuck Foreman, chief of the Camden-Jackson Township Volunteer Fire Department.

When firefighters arrived moments later, the garage "was definitely fully engulfed," he said.

Firefighters from every department in Carroll County battled the blaze for hours. They had the biggest hot spots controlled by 4 a.m., Foreman said.

"It looked like the building was a total loss," said Scott Sisson, chief of the Flora Volunteer Fire Department. "I didn't see anything inside that looked like it was salvageable."

Firefighters had to brave wind chills below zero during the battle.

"It was terribly cold," Foreman said. "We were lucky any trucks didn't freeze up."

At least four tractor trailers and numerous other items inside the building were destroyed, Foreman said. He estimated the damage at \$750,000.

Nobody was inside when firefighters arrived, and no one was injured in the fire, Foreman said.

Hog Slat general manager Richard Hicks did not want to comment on the fire, noting that the investigation was ongoing.

The company manufactures feed products for swine, Hicks said.

Though officials don't believe the fire to be suspicious in nature, no cause has been determined, Foreman said.

The Carroll County Fire Investigative Task Force is investigating the fire, Foreman said. A team from Indiana's fire marshal's office was scheduled to arrive today.

[Back to Fire](#)



Indiana Fire Departments Receiving Homeland Security Grants

By Scott Sarvay

Story Published: Feb 5, 2009 at 12:50 PM EST

Story Updated: Feb 5, 2009 at 12:50 PM EST

WASHINGTON (News Release) - U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar was notified today that 18 Indiana fire departments will receive funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program totaling \$1,392,787.

AFG funds are utilized by the nation's firefighters to increase the effectiveness of firefighting and emergency response operations, and to improve firefighter health and safety programs.

In Fiscal Year 2008 AFG was administered by FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration. The AFG Program provides grants on a competitive basis to rural, urban and suburban fire departments throughout the United States.

Fire departments with questions about the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program may reach the fire grants help desk toll free at 1-866-274-0960 or firegrants@dhs.gov. For the most current information regarding the AFGP, visit www.firegrantsupport.com.

Questions regarding the application process may be directed to Andrew Mills, Grants Coordinator, by phone at 202-224-4814 or by email at grants@lugar.senate.gov.

The following departments received grants:

Organization Name
Program Area
Amount
City

Lake Ridge Volunteer Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$68,339.00
Gary

East Chicago Fire Department

Operations and Safety
\$40,500.00
East Chicago

Bean Blossom Township-Stinesville Fire Dept. Inc.
Operations and Safety
\$53,960.00
Stinesville

Liberty Township
Operations and Safety
\$64,112.00
Liberty Center

Walnut Township Fire Dept. and EMS
Operations and Safety
\$20,031.00
New Ross

Oaktown Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.
Operations and Safety
\$60,096.00
Oaktown

Chalmers Community Volunteer Fire Dept.
Operations and Safety
\$69,825.00
Chalmers

Westfield Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$95,850.00
Westfield

Amboy Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.
Operations and Safety
\$30,400.00
Amboy

Beech Creek Township Eastern Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$38,475.00
Solsberry

Michigan Township Volunteer Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$53,502.00
Michigantown

Carter Fire District
Operations and Safety
\$41,126.00
Dale

South Bend Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$360,000.00

South Bend

Richland Township Volunteer Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$99,655.00
Anderson

Garrett Fire Department
Vehicle Acquisition
\$190,000.00
Garrett

Greenwood Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$47,336.00
Greenwood

Centre Township Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$48,764.00
South Bend

Royal Center Volunteer Fire Department
Operations and Safety
\$10,816.00
Royal Center

Source: Office of U.S. Senator Richard Lugar

[Back to Fire](#)

Post-Tribune

Melting snow puts Kankakee River on flood alert

(<http://www.post-trib.com/news/1420091.flood.article>)

February 9, 2009

By Gitte Laasby

Post-Tribune staff writer

The Kankakee River could start flooding at Shelby early Monday as a result of melting snow. Depending on the amount of rain falling Tuesday and Wednesday, the flood could affect area roads and last several weeks, according to the National Weather Service.

By Sunday night, the stage was more than 8.2 feet at Shelby. The weather service predicts flood stage of 9 feet could be reached early Monday and would last at least until Sunday. Levels could be high enough to affect county and local roads near Indiana 55 by Tuesday.

But the flood could be worse and last a lot longer than that because the flood warning doesn't take into consideration a thunderstorm with heavy rain that will likely hit Tuesday and last into Wednesday.

"We are going to have a potential for heavy rain. As far as who gets the heavy rain, it's still early for that," said National Weather Service meteorologist Nathan Marsili, but "if we do get one to three inches, Shelby for several weeks will probably be in flood."

Wildwood Estates and Sumava Resorts experience flooding at 10 feet, and water starts getting on the roads. The weather service advises people to never drive through water if it's covering the road.

Kankakee at 5 S Kouts is expected to reach 10 feet, a foot below flood stage. Kankakee at Dunns Bridge is not predicted to flood. The Little Calumet River is not expected to flood either. It reached nearly 6.7 feet Sunday, but flood stage is 12 feet.

It's the increased runoff and stream flows from the high temperatures the past few days that's causing the Kankakee flooding and possibly creating ice jams.

On Tuesday night, heavy lake effect snow hit Porter County, blanketing many areas with up to 20 inches of snow. Burdick, a few miles east of Chesterton, got the most at 29 inches.

The high temperature in Chicago on Saturday was 56 degrees.

January was tied for the tenth coldest on record in Chicago with only five days registering above freezing, according to the National Weather Service.

Contact Gitte Laasby at 648-2183 or glaasby@post-trib.com.

Comment on this story at www.post-trib.com.

[Back to Flooding](#)

Southern Indiana braces for potential flooding

WTHR-TV

updated 10:43 p.m. ET, Sun., Feb. 8, 2009

[Richard Essex](#)/Eyewitness News

Morgan County - As temperatures rise, so are fears of flooding across southern Indiana.

It has been a week of shoveling across the region, from heavy snow to filling sandbags. But as the snow melts, the frozen ground leaves nowhere for the water to go.

As the director of the Morgan County Department of Emergency Management, Jeff Neal knows a thing or two about flooding. Etched into his collective career experience is some of the worst flooding Indiana has ever seen and with the rapid increase in temperatures, he is leaving little to chance.

"They say we could get one or two inches of rain over that period," Neal said. "With the snow melt, [that] could cause some flooding issues."

Flooding is fairly common in parts of Morgan County. Local, state and federal programs are in place to remove some homes from the more frequently flooded areas.

The rebuilding process from last June's floods in Martinsville is very evident. Many houses are still being worked on, others are empty, waiting to be torn down after repeated floods.

"With the mitigation plan buying homes that is taking place right now, it's a slow process. It's not all completed," Neal said.

For the people still in harm's way, Neal has sandbags and sand ready to go.

"I've got 21,000 now on hand here at the building for people to mitigate and prepare for the flooding if they live in these low-lying areas," Neal said.

Governor Mitch Daniels and the Department of Homeland Security are keeping an eye on the forecast and the rising water.

"I think we are ready. Should there be a problem, it can't be any worse than what we dealt with last June," Daniels said.

[Back to Flooding](#)

February 5, 2009

Last week's snow cost county \$60,000

City figures were unavailable Wednesday, but Mayor McShurley said Muncie only had enough money for about one more big storm.

By NICK WERNER

nwerner@muncie.gannett.com

MUNCIE -- Last week's snow storm cost the Delaware County Highway Department \$60,000 between Tuesday and Sunday, according to figures reported this week by county commissioners.

The majority of that cost, which is in addition to routine expenses, is for overtime and fuel.

County commissioners President Todd Donati said he was working with State Rep. Dennis Tyler, D-Muncie, and Indiana's Department of Homeland Security to see if Delaware County would be eligible for federal disaster relief to offset snow removal costs.

Federal relief generally reimburses local governments at 75 percent of the total costs of disaster response.

John Erickson, spokesman of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, said the state was still gathering information and researching whether local governments would be eligible for federal aid.

Eligibility would depend on several variables, including whether last week's snowfall was a record or near record for the state.

Muncie Deputy Mayor Dick Shirey, who is also the city's interim street superintendent, said Tuesday he did not yet have figures for how much the storm cost the city.

The city only had enough money to budget \$10,000 in overtime for the street department and is already out, Shirey said.

The city is also fast exhausting its salt supply, Shirey said.

At Monday's city council meeting, Mayor Sharon McShurley publicly announced the city was struggling after last week's storm.

"We might be able to weather one more big storm and then we'll be in a financial crunch," she said before this Tuesday's snowfall, which did not prove as significant as last week's storm.

Additional Facts

Snow removal spending

Last week's snow storm cost the Delaware County Highway Department an additional \$60,000 in overtime, salt, fuel and other expenses (not including routine, daily costs).

- Overtime: \$27,511
- Salt/sand: \$6,775
- Gasoline: \$2,312
- Diesel: \$16,912
- Towing: \$250
- Repairs: \$5,200
- Mailbox replacement: \$1,000

[Back to Top](#)